



**COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES
DEPARTMENT OF AUDITOR-CONTROLLER**

KENNETH HAHN HALL OF ADMINISTRATION
500 WEST TEMPLE STREET, ROOM 525
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA 90012-3873
PHONE: (213) 974-8301 FAX: (213) 626-5427

WENDY L. WATANABE
AUDITOR-CONTROLLER

ASST. AUDITOR-CONTROLLERS

ROBERT A. DAVIS
JOHN NAIMO
JAMES L. SCHNEIDERMAN
JUDI E. THOMAS

August 16, 2011

TO: Supervisor Michael D. Antonovich, Mayor
Supervisor Gloria Molina
Supervisor Mark Ridley-Thomas
Supervisor Zev Yaroslavsky
Supervisor Don Knabe

FROM: Wendy L. Watanabe
Auditor-Controller

SUBJECT: **STATUS REPORT – REVIEW OF THE DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN
AND FAMILY SERVICES' EMERGENCY RESPONSE COMMAND POST
(Board Agenda Item 7, July 12, 2011)**

On July 12, 2011, your Board instructed the Auditor-Controller to conduct an independent review of the Department of Children and Family Services' (DCFS) Emergency Response Command Post (ERCP) operations since 2005. The instructions were based, in part, on allegations that some foster children, who were awaiting placement in community care facilities, had remained at the ERCP longer than the maximum time allowed under State regulations.

We have started our review of ERCP operations, but have encountered delays. Specifically, County Counsel has advised that, because of State confidentiality laws, we cannot review the case files of children who were awaiting placement at the ERCP without an order of the Juvenile Court (Court).

On July 25, 2011, County Counsel filed a petition with the Court requesting permission for us to have access to the ERCP case files and to interview minors. Counsel indicated that the Court could rule on the petition in the next few weeks. In the interim, we are working with County Counsel to determine if there are other ways we may be able to access the ERCP information needed to continue our review, without violating confidentiality rules.

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Pending Court action on the petition, we will provide you with a second status report by September 30, 2011.

Please call me if you have any questions, or your staff may contact Jim Schneiderman at (213) 974-8303.

WLW:JLS:RGC:YK

c: William T Fujioka, Chief Executive Officer
Jackie Contreras, Ph.D., Acting Director, DCFS
Phillip L. Browning, Director, Department of Public Social Services
Andrea Sheridan Ordin, County Counsel
Sachi A. Hamai, Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Audit Committee
Public Information Office